



NEWS RELEASE

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Freight Train Apprehensions Dramatically Reduced

Harlingen Station Conducts Majority of Freight Train Inspections

McALLEN, Texas – During fiscal year 1997 (FY97), prior to “Operation Rio Grande”, the four Border Patrol Stations of the McAllen Sector that conducted Transportation Check Inspections of interior bound freight trains arrested more than 11,000 undocumented immigrants attempting to gain access to the interior of the United States utilizing freight trains.

“Operation Rio Grande” which commenced in Brownsville, Texas, on Aug. 25, 1997, is an operation that focuses personnel and resources to the areas with the most illegal activity within the McAllen Sector in an effort to control those areas. This operation was started as FY97 was coming to an end and has proven effective over the last five years.

During FY98, the total number of undocumented immigrants arrested utilizing the freight trains in the McAllen Sector was reduced to 8,709, a 21% decrease from FY97. The number of arrests in FY99 was reduced again totaling 4,692 a 46% decrease from FY98 and 57% decrease from fiscal year 1997. In FY00 the number of arrests were reduced again to 2,177 a 53% decrease from FY99 and an 80% decrease from FY97.



Border Patrol Agent utilizing a K-9 to inspect a train car.

The number of arrests for FY01 and FY02 were 2,689 and 2,095 respectively. FY02 arrests decreased 81% from FY97 arrests. The Harlingen Border Patrol Station conducts the majority of freight train inspections in the McAllen Sector, and accounted for 1,187 of the 2,095 for FY02 or 56.66% of FY02 arrests.

Other stations within the McAllen Sector that conduct freight train inspections include the Brownsville Station with 64 arrests or 3.05% of FY02 arrests, the Corpus Christi Station with 450 arrests or 21.48% of FY02 arrests, and the Kingsville Station with 394 arrests or 18.81% of FY 02 arrests.

Although the number of arrests has decreased significantly, the Harlingen Border Patrol Station, as well as the other three stations, continue to conduct freight train inspections as a deterrence to those persons contemplating the use of the freight trains to gain access to the interior of the United States, and enhancing security of our nations borders.

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